

News from HIPAA & Medicaid

A bulletin for health-care providers

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR THE BILLING STAFF OF HEALTH-CARE PROVIDERS:

MAA COMPLETES PHASE THREE OF HIPAA AND FOCUSES ON BOOSTING PROVIDER COMPLIANCE

OLYMPIA, Wash. – In May, the Medical Assistance Administration completed Phase 3 of its compliance plan under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), adding a half-dozen new formats to the claims transactions available to HIPAA-compliant providers and submitters. The looming task now is to convert remaining Washington providers still relying on the old formats into compliance and set a hard cutover date for the end of dual support.

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New transactions available to providers include:

- **835 -- Health Care Payment and Remittance Advice**, an electronic message to providers and submitters that provides information about claims that have been accepted and paid
- **820 -- Remittance advice and payment notices for managed care plans**
- **276/277 -- An electronic exchange that lets providers query MAA about claim status**
- **277U -- An electronic alert to providers when claims are pended**
- **278 -- Additional information that will certify and authorize referrals**

There are a few more HIPAA enhancements to look forward to in Phase 4. Although MAA has been able to accept HIPAA compliant transactions since October 16, 2003, we are still developing an enhanced application to allow Web-enabled 837 I, P, & D transactions; the 837I for nursing homes; and a 837 Encounter Data Report that will let MAA accept claims-related information from managed care contractors. Those transactions are targeted for implementation by the end of this year.

DUAL SUPPORT CUTOFF: Providers may continue to file electronic claims in the old formats. **However, they must start taking action to become HIPAA compliant.** The MAA HIPAA team is turning its attention to providers who are not billing in the compliant format and, like all HIPAA entities, is under pressure to move to full compliance. States like Washington are also looking to the federal government to signal its own HIPAA intentions via the Medicare system. MAA's current expectations are that dual support will continue until Internet claims submissions through a Web portal are available in Phase 4. At this time, nearly all Medicaid pharmacy claims are being filed in the new format, but less than 15 percent of all other claim types are being filed as HIPAA-compliant claims.

PROVIDER TRAINING: The HIPAA team conducted successful provider training across the state in April, helping providers' billing staffs put together some of the fundamentals required for HIPAA compliance. Providers can register their interest in future training by visiting the MAA Web site at <http://maa.dshs.wa.gov/dshshipaa> and completing the new on-line training request form or by e-mailing HIPAA Communications Manager Becky Boutilier at boutibm@dshs.wa.gov

HIPAA LISTSERV: You are invited to subscribe to the new HIPAA LISTSERV located at <http://listserv.wa.gov/archives/maa-hipaa.html> This LISTSERV provides access to important MAA-HIPAA announcements via e-mail. Sign up for this free service today!

ENROLLMENT: Many providers still need to access the Affiliated Computer Services (ACS) Web site to order or download enrollment packets for provider and/or submitter numbers. Successful enrollment through ACS EDI Gateway is crucial to your ability to send HIPAA-compliant electronic claims and to use the Web interactive services. You can contact ACS at 1-800-833-2051 or via the Internet at http://www.acs-gcro.com/Medicaid_Accounts/Washington_State_Medicaid/washington_state_medicaid.htm Then visit MAA's Provider Relations Web site (<http://maa.dshs.wa.gov/ProvRel>) to verify your submitter number after you get your welcome packet from ACS.

RIGHT THE FIRST TIME: MAA is embarking on a HIPAA-related but independent quality improvement initiative over the coming year. Called "Right The First Time" or simply "RTFT" for short, the project will tie one of MAA's core business functions (processing claims and reimbursing providers) to a broad and prolonged quality improvement effort aimed at eliminating the errors and omissions that suspend or deny claims unnecessarily when they enter the system. The most common cause for denial of Medicaid claims is simply an omitted provider number, but the root causes of that kind of mistake are shared with providers by nearly every MAA office, from the folks who enroll providers and the writers who put together numbered memos and billing instructions to the computer technicians who operate the MMIS and the operators who answer providers' queries by telephone. Bad planning, poor choice of edits, misguided attempts to eliminate problems that end up causing new problems – all of these factors that need to be tracked down and rooted out. You'll be hearing more about RTFT as the year progresses – the project is headed by a former MAA Director, Diane Weeden, and providers and their billing shops are invited to send Diane an e-mail (weeded@dshs.wa.gov) if they have ideas or thoughts to consider. If you would like a free fact sheet on RTFT, e-mail stevej2@dshs.wa.gov

HIPAA HELP (Save these contacts):

- **Affiliated Computer Services (ACS)** hot line for technical testing questions on software or ACS EDI GATEWAY SERVICES: 1-800-833-2051
- **DSHS HIPAA Web Site** for free software and HIPAA-compliance information: <http://maa.dshs.wa.gov/dshshipaa>
- **Federal HIPAA compliance site**, with practical advice for providers and the answers to frequently-asked questions (FAQ): <http://www.cms.gov/hipaa>
- **Executive summary of MAA's HIPAA compliance plan:** http://maa.dshs.wa.gov/dshshipaa/attachments/pdf/HIPAAExecSummary_012804.pdf
- **ACS EDI Gateway, Inc.:** http://www.acs-gcro.com/Medicaid_Accounts/medicaid_accounts.htm
- **POS:** Email provider.relations@acs-inc.com or call 1-800-365-4944 to get in contact with customer service representatives and set up testing. Information is also available on the ACS Web site at: <http://www.acspsbmhipaa.com>.

HUMAN CONTACT:

Special POS Support: Randy Stamp (randy.stamp@acs-inc.com)
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Becky Boutilier, HIPAA Communications Manager, 360-725-2129 (boutibm@dshs.wa.gov)
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Send email questions to hipaacomunications@dshs.wa.gov

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